

Application No. 10/069,720
Reply to Office Action of July 14, 2004

special technical feature in each group).” While the requirement does list the different groups of claims, it DOES NOT “(2) explain why each group lacks unity with each other group (i.e., why there is no single general inventive concept) specifically describing the unique special technical feature in each group” (emphasis added).

Specifically, with respect to Group II, the requirement attempts to erroneously establish that “the method can be done my means of a hand rather than by a transfer mechanism.” However, it does not matter if the method can be done by hand, which it cannot as Claim 10 requires supporting a substrate on a substrate support member attached to a transfer mechanism; because M.P.E.P. § 1893.03(d) notes that:

An apparatus or means is specifically designed for carrying out the process when the apparatus or means is suitable for carrying out the process with the technical relationship being present between the claimed apparatus or means and the claimed process. The expression specifically designed does not imply that the apparatus or means could not be used for carrying out another process, nor does it imply that the process could not be carried out using an alternative apparatus or means.

Furthermore, the Restriction Requirement fails to address Claim 11, stating only that Claims 1-9 constitute Group I, and Claims 10 and 12 constitute Group II. M.P.E.P. § 1893.03(d) also states that “a group of inventions is considered linked to form a single, general inventive concept where there is a technical relationship among the inventions that involves at least one common or corresponding special technical feature.” Claim 11 recites a part-mounting apparatus which includes the part carrying device set forth in Claim 1. Therefore, Claim 11 shares the same technical feature with Claims 1-9. Further, since Claim 11 is directed to an apparatus, Claim 11 cannot be considered a “method [that] can be done by means of a hand...” as asserted in the Restriction Requirement. Therefore, should the Restriction Requirement be maintained, Claim 11 should be considered together with Claims 1-9, Group I.

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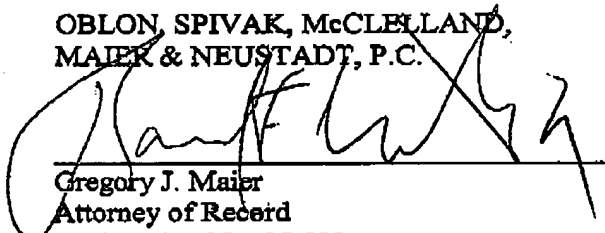
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Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully traverse the outstanding election requirement on the grounds that a full examination on the merits of Claims 1-12 should be conducted.

However, if the Restriction requirement is maintained, then Claim 11 should be considered as sharing a technical relationship with the claims of Group I and included accordingly therein.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



Gregory J. Maier
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 25,599

Raymond F. Cardillo
Registration No. 40,440

GJM/RFC/ATH/des

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